

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows.

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A nutritional or pharmaceutical composition which provides a nutritional benefit without the constipating effects associated with the use of calcium salts alone comprising: one or more water containing components in which the water is releasably bound wherein CaO and anhydrous or calcined MgSO₄ are mixed in the composition in an amount capable of sequestering any water which may be released from the one or more water containing components to provide a continuous desiccant effect under normal handling conditions.

Claims 2-3 (Canceled)

Claim 4. (Previously Amended) The composition according to claim 1, wherein the CaO is present in an amount up to 10% by weight of the composition.

Claim 5. (Previously Amended) The composition according to claim 1, wherein anhydrous or calcined MgSO₄ is present in an amount up to 10% by weight of the composition.

Claim 6. (Previously Amended) A composition as recited in claim 1, which further comprises an acid component and a carbonate and/or bicarbonate sufficient to cause said composition to effervesce in water.

Claim 7. (Previously Amended) A composition as claimed in claim 6, wherein said acid component is calcium lactate.

Claim 8. (Previously Amended) A composition as claimed in claim 1 further comprising a sulphite.

Claim 9. (Previously Amended) A composition premix comprising an acid or salt thereof in admixture with CaO and anhydrous or calcined MgSO₄.

Claim 10. (Previously Amended) The use of CaO and anhydrous or calcined MgSO₄ in the manufacture of a nutritional or pharmaceutical composition for the purpose of effectively removing/mopping up adventitious water.

Claim 11. (Previously Amended) A method of manufacturing a nutritional or pharmaceutical composition comprising one or more components which contain water which is releasably bound wherein the manufacturing steps are conducted in the absence of special low humidity conditions and CaO and anhydrous or calcined MgSO_4 are intimately mixed in the product in an amount capable of sequestering any water which may be released from water containing components to provide a continuous desiccant effect.

Claim 12. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 1, wherein the CaO is present in an amount up to 10% by weight of the composition.

Claim 13. (Currently Amended) The composition according to claim 1, wherein anhydrous or calcined MgSO_4 is present in an amount up to 10% by weight of the composition.

Claim 14. (Previously Added) The nutritional or pharmaceutical composition as claimed in claim 1 wherein CaO is present in an amount of from 4-8% by weight of the composition.

Claim 15. (Previously Added) The nutritional or pharmaceutical composition as claimed in claim 1 wherein the anhydrous or calcined MgSO_4 is present in an amount of from 1-5% by weight of the composition.

Claim 16. (Previously Added) The composition premix as claimed in claim 9 wherein the acid salt is calcium lactate.